

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 JERUSA 01528 261220Z
ACTION NODS-00

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9488
INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T JERUSALEM 1528

EXDIS

TREAT AS NODIS

FROM CHARGE VIETS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MOPS, MILI, PBOR, US, IS, LE
SUBJECT: SOUTHERN LEBANON

1. PRIME MINISTER BEGIN TELEPHONED ME A FEW MINUTES AGO TO EXPRESS HIS PERSONAL GRATITUDE AND THAT OF GOI FOR OUR ASSISTANCE IN ARRANGING CEASE-FIRE. HE WAS EFFUSIVE IN HIS PRAISE.

2. HE THEN WENT ON TO RAISE ISSUE OF ROCKET ATTACKS THIS MORNING ON QIRYAT SHEMONA AND METULLA. HE SAID ISRAELI FORCES HAD BEEN ORDERED TO HOLD THEIR FIRE, BUT HE WANTED WASHINGTON TO UNDERSTAND THAT ISRAEL COULD NOT REMAIN PASSIVE SHOULD SUCH ATTACKS CONTINUE. IT WAS HIS PROFOUND HOPE THAT THE CEASE-FIRE WOULD BE OBSERVED SCRUPULOUSLY BY ALL PARTIES, BUT AS PRIME MINISTER, HE HAD THE BASIC DUTY OF DEFENDING HIS PEOPLE AGAINST INCURSIONS FROM OUTSIDE. HE TRUSTED THERE IS NO MISUNDERSTANDING IN WASHINGTON ON THAT SCORE.

3. I REVIEWED WITH THE PRIME MINISTER ARGUMENTS CONTAINED IN
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STATE 230609, STRESSING THAT WE FULLY UNDERSTOOD PRESSURES WHICH SUCH UNPROVOKED ATTACKS PLACED ON HIM, BUT URGING MAXIMUM RESTRAINT. BEGIN REPLIED THAT HE WOULD DO ALL IN HIS POWER TO ENSURE THAT THE CEASE-FIRE HELD, BUT THAT HE WAS CONCERNED THAT THERE WERE THOSE ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE BORDER WHO WOULD ACTIVELY WORK AGAINST THE MAINTENANCE OF THE CEASE-FIRE. HE THEN MOVED ON TO A BRIEF EXPRESSION OF HOPE THAT NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE

LEBANESE CAN BE PROMPTLY INITIATED UNDER ILMAC AUSPICES. HE STRESSED AGAIN ISRAEL'S HOPE THAT WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF THESE NEGOTIATIONS IT WILL BE POSSIBLE TO MOVE ALL PALESTINIAN FORCES BACK BEHIND THE LITANI.

4. FOREIGN AFFAIRS DIRGEN EVRON CALLED A MOMENT LATER TO REITERATE CONCERNS OVER MAINTENANCE OF THE CEASE-FIRE WHICH WEIZMAN AND BEGIN HAD MADE TO ME EARLIER. HE WARNED THAT EVENTS OF THE LAST TWO HOURS WERE "CASTING A DARK CLOUD OVER THE CEASE-FIRE" AND THAT "IF THERE IS A REPETITION WE WILL HAVE TO EXERCISE THE RIGHT OF SELF- DEFENSE." I REPEATED THE ARGUMENTS FAVORING PATIENCE AND RESTRAINT AND ASSURED HIM THAT WE WOULD DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE (WITHIN THE LIMITATION OF THE SITUATION) TO ENSURE THERE WERE NO FURTHER ROCKET ATTACKS AND THAT THE CEASE-FIRE WAS HONORED.
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Message Attributes

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